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The Texas A&M University System

S.O.S. Shopper:

Good values in men's clothing can often be found this month. When you are sale shopping, it is important to consider fashion, fit, workmanship and wardrobe coordination. I hope this leaflet, *Women's Guide to Men's Fashions*, will help you find big savings.

The S.O.S. letter series and other educational programs are provided at no charge by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Extension publications are available from my office to give you shopping guides for other items you may find on sale this month. If you would like to receive any of these bulletins or know more about other Extension programs, please contact me.

Happy Sales!

County Extension Agent



WOMEN'S GUIDE TO MEN'S FASHIONS

Women buy more clothes for men than men buy for themselves. Understanding men's fashions will help you shop wisely.

Men's fashion choices are as varied and exciting as the men who wear them. Each season brings a wide variety of styles to suit personal preferences and tastes.

Fashions are often grouped into styles or looks such as Western, rugged and classic. Within each group are variations of styling detail from which to choose. Usually suits, jackets, slacks, vests, sweaters and leisure wear are available in each style group. Choices can be made from one or all of the style groups to express personality and meet needs.

Shopping for your men requires their cooperation when it's time to buy suits, slacks, coats and jackets. They will need to try these garments on for fit, comfort and overall appearance.

Fit

No matter how fashionable a new garment is, a man is not well-dressed if it does not fit. A look of naturalness and ease is more flattering than a tight-fitting garment that hugs the body. The only way to be sure an item of clothing will fit is to try it. A garment should be comfortable and good looking while standing, moving, walking, bending and sitting. When a man tries clothes on he should put everything he normally carries in the pockets, then check for fit.

How loosely or tightly a garment fits is a matter of personal preference, but there are some general guidelines for the appearance of a well-fitting garment:

- Allow sufficient ease for comfortable breathing and moving, and avoid stress on seams or closures. Alterations, if needed, may be made by an experienced tailor.
- Vertical folds may be a sign that the garment is too large.
- Horizontal wrinkles usually indicate a garment is too small.
- Shirt and jacket sleeves should be long enough to cover the wristbone when the arm is bent.
- The length of slacks and trousers will vary with the style of shoe and width of pant leg. Just touching the top of the shoe is usually an attractive length.

Workmanship

A well-made garment is durable and retains a pleasing appearance after many wearings and cleanings. While higher quality garments usually cost more, price does not always determine quality. It is important to examine clothing before buying to make sure you know what degree of quality you are receiving for the price you are paying. Look for these general points as you shop to help you determine quality of workmanship:

- Patterned fabrics — stripes, checks and plaids — are matched at the seams as well as at flaps, pockets and closings.
- Seams are sewn straight and are wide enough to allow for alterations, if necessary.
- Top-stitching and other decorative trims are even, secure and uniform.
- Points on collars and lapels do not curl.
- Buttonholes are made with close, even stitches and are reinforced at the ends.
- Inner fabrics provide body, but not stiffness.
- Pocket fabric should be strong, durable and closely woven.
- In partially lined jackets exposed seams should be securely and attractively finished.

Getting It All Together

Men's clothing today is exciting. Popular fabrics range from subtle plaids to pastel prints to sedate pinstripes. The colors, patterns and styles that a man wears should reflect what he likes and what he wants to communicate about himself. Help him discover which ones are best for him by encouraging him to experiment with color, pattern and style.

Color, pattern, texture and style can be used to add height, weight or both, or to slim the silhouette. Vertical lines and designs, flat smooth textures and muted colors provide an illusion of height and slimness. Horizontal designs, bulky fabrics and bright colors add weight and cut height.

Developing a workable wardrobe can be quite a challenge. To create a variety of different outfits, buy slacks, jackets and shirts that can be worn in different but coordinated combinations. Some suits are sold with two pairs of pants. Expand this idea so there are several choices to wear with each garment.

Avoid hanging several garments on one hanger. Instead, group clothing — pants together, jackets together and shirts together. Separating garments by type may make it easier to see new combinations.



Prepared by Extension clothing specialists, The Texas A&M University System.

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